

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'  
MILLENNIAL STAR

ESTABLISHED IN 1840

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*“The Church of Jesus Christ has again, and for the last time, been set up and made the depository of God’s truth and the fulness of it; and has been given the mission of proclaiming that truth and the fulness of it to every nation and kindred and tongue and people.”—BRIGHAM H. ROBERTS.*

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**SPIRITUAL STRENGTH THROUGH FASTING**

ELDER JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH

OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TWELVE

WE HAVE assembled here this afternoon according to custom, and also by commandment given to the Church through revelation, which is as follows:

Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things.

Thou shalt offer a sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in righteousness, even that of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.

And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day;

For verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labours, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High;

Nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days and at all times;

But remember that on this, the Lord’s day, thou shalt offer thine oblations and thy sacraments unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord.

And on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect, or, in other words, that thy joy may be full.

To-day being the first Sunday in the month, it is known among Latter-day Saints as Fast Day. That means that this day has been set apart, as each first Sunday of the month is set apart, as a day upon which the members of the Church are to abstain from food and drink, going to the house of the Lord, with the privilege granted them in the Fast Meetings which are held, of bearing testimony, speaking of the goodness of the Lord unto them, con-

fessing their sins, if they feel so inclinéd, and with contrite hearts and broken spirits worshipping the Lord.

It is expected that upon this day we shall do no other thing, except serve the Lord in fasting, prayer and reflection, and when the fast is finished, we should partake of food with singleness of heart, in the spirit of prayer and thanksgiving unto the Lord for His many blessings.

I desire to say something this afternoon in relation to this custom of fasting as taught among the Latter-day Saints. This is a law the Lord has given to the Church. Fasting, however, is not something new. It is a principle that is well known, and has been from the beginning. In fact, if we had the records before us, we would discover that fasting was introduced by revelation to man in the dawn of history. This principle has come down through the ages through the practice of the ancients and the writings of the prophets of the Lord.

Fasting was a principle well understood in ancient Israel, and even before Israel was born. The covenant people of the Lord anciently came together in the spirit of fasting, with contrite spirits and broken hearts, to worship God and to obtain His blessings. David, the psalmist, said :

But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth : I humbled my soul with fasting ; and my prayer returned unto mine own bosom.

It was customary in those days, when men fasted, or when the nation was called upon to fast because the people were in bondage or distress, to clothe the body in sackcloth, a very coarse clothing and put ashes on their heads, to show their humility and repentance. Therefore, David makes reference to this, saying that in his distress he sought the Lord with his clothing of sackcloth, and his soul humbled through fasting.

#### OBJECT OF FASTING IS REPENTANCE AND HUMILITY

And by doing so he obtained a blessing, for his prayer returned unto his own bosom. The object of fasting is to bring about a condition of repentance and humility by subjecting the flesh to the spirit. Most of us have our spirits constantly in subjection to the flesh, and because of this we fail to bring ourselves into close communion with God.

As I have said, fasting has come down from the earliest times. However, this sacred principle became perverted when men turned from the truth and from serving the living God, just as all other principles of the Gospel became perverted. In many lands men when they fasted, began to afflict themselves. They would cut their bodies and in other ways torment the flesh, and cause great pain in order that the flesh might be brought into subjection to the spirit. Moreover, they did all of this to be seen of men ; they glorified in their afflictions and their perverted

fastings, as long as they obtained the praise of men. Such fasts were held in public places where the faster could be seen. All of this, of course, was displeasing in the sight of God, who never intended that men should torture themselves in such manner, when they sought His blessings through fasting.

The correct fast is abstaining from food and drink for the period of the fast; not in cutting or mutilating the body or in other ways causing physical pain. The Lord cannot be pleased with that kind of a manifestation, as we may readily learn from that wonderful discourse called the Sermon on the Mount, in which the Saviour gave to His disciples the following instructions:

Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

But thou when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

In these words the Saviour put the stamp of approval upon fasting, but not a fast which is made for show, to be seen of men. The Jews in His day had reached that condition in their hypocritical apostasy of manifesting their faith, or the practice of their perverted religion, to be seen of men. When they fasted they did it openly; when they paid alms, they did it where it would be noticed and the praise of the people would be accorded them.

Whatever they did it was done in that spirit, and therefore, through the praise they received and the spirit of wickedness in which it was done, they received their reward. But we have been commanded to fast secretly, to comb our hair, wash our hands and face, and go about as if nothing unusual had happened. Thus the Lord who sees in secret, would reward openly.

A great many of us, by our way of living, yielding to the desires of the flesh, subject our spirits to the flesh, and thus shut ourselves out from the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. When the flesh predominates, the Spirit of the Lord cannot find opportunity to reach the souls of men, and hence men do not receive the blessings of the Lord which otherwise would be given unto them.

#### REMARKABLE INSTANCES RECORDED IN SCRIPTURES

In the scriptures we have some remarkable instances recorded of fasting. We are informed that Moses fasted forty days. Elijah, also, after having been fed by an angel, went forty days on the strength of that which he received. The Saviour, Himself, before He entered His ministry, fasted forty days and forty nights. These were exceptional fasts. It would be unwise, extremely unwise, for the ordinary individual to attempt to fast

forty days, because Jesus did, or because Moses or other prophets of old had fasted that length of time.

We are not called upon to do such a thing. The Lord will be pleased with our fasting if we will follow the law given to the Church, and abstain from both food and drink for twenty-four hours, or one day, at the time appointed. Then, perhaps, on some special occasion, when conditions were proper for it, we might have other fasts, and they might be extended beyond one day, but lengthy fasts are not good and the Lord has not called upon us to undertake such things, but to be guided by reason in all things.

There were good reasons, without a doubt, why our Saviour should go into the wilderness and fast for forty days and forty nights; but let us remember He was the Son of God—the Redeemer of the world. He knew what He was doing. If I went into the wilderness to fast for forty days it would be a very foolish thing for me to do, and I am sure the Lord would not be pleased with me for doing it. I might fast on some certain occasion for one, two, three or four days, or even longer, if I felt the necessity for it, but if I observe the law given to the Church that is what the Lord requires of me. So I may say unto each of you.

#### ISRAEL CALLED TO REPENTANCE

In early days, Israel, because of customs among other nations, and perhaps inclination, learned to follow the customs of others in their fasting in a way not pleasing to the Lord. Therefore the prophets had to call them to repentance. Isaiah cried unto the people :

Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.

Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.

Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? Wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.

Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness; ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?



Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.

#### WE SHOULD STRIVE TO SUBJECT OUR SPIRITS TO GOD

We should fast to be heard of the Lord, but not to make strife and debate, or to smite in wickedness, nor to be heard of men; but rather that we might be in subjection to the Spirit of God that we might know the truth, which is of God. Moreover, that we might have more sympathy for the poor and to deal out bread to the hungry, and to cover the naked that he be not ashamed.

Joel, also speaking of this subject has said:

Therefore also now, saith the Lord, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping and with mourning:

And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and He will turn away the evil from you.

This was said because the people required repentance. This prophet calls upon the people to seek the Lord and to rend their hearts instead of their garments, because in those days when tribulation came upon them, the custom was to rend their garments as they sat in sackcloth and ashes, but it was not always that they had rent hearts, in other words, that they had humbled themselves and with contrite spirits sought the Lord in their fasts.

I have mentioned these things to show that the principle of fasting was known and practised among the peoples of old. It is something the Lord has called upon the Latter-day Saints to practise now. Here is the word of the Lord to the Church:

And I give unto you, who are the first labourers in this last kingdom, a commandment that you assemble yourselves together, and organize yourselves, and prepare yourselves, and sanctify yourselves; yea, purify your hearts, and cleanse your hands and your feet before me, that I may make you clean;

That I may testify unto your Father, and your God, and my God, that you are clean from the blood of this wicked generation: that I may fulfill this promise, this great and last promise, which I have made unto you, when I will.

Also I give unto you a commandment that ye shall continue in prayer and fasting from this time forth.

This is the command the Lord has given the Latter-day Saints to-day, by which we are under obligation to observe the Fast Day which the Lord has taught to us. The whole world would be better, physically and spiritually, if they were to adopt this practice of fasting one day each month as the Latter-day Saints are commanded to do. Moreover, this does not mean abstinence from certain kinds of food only, as taught in some churches. It means abstinence entirely, and in the spirit of humility, repent-

ance, forgiveness and prayer, as we seek the blessings and guidance of the Lord.

I have before me an excerpt from a discourse by President Joseph F. Smith. Because it sets forth so clearly the purpose of fasting among the Latter-day Saints, I shall read it:

#### VIEWS OF PRESIDENT JOSEPH F. SMITH

While the Gospel message requires faith and repentance, it requires also that temporal necessities must be met. So the Lord has revealed plans for the temporal salvation of the people. For the benefit of the poor we have the fast instituted, a leading object of which, among other things, is to provide the poor with food and other necessities until they may help themselves. For it is clear that plans which contemplate only relieving present distress are deficient. The Church has always sought to place its members in a way to help themselves, rather than adopting the method of so many charitable institutions, of providing for only the present needs.

When help is withdrawn or used up, more must be provided from the same sources, thus making paupers of the poor, and teaching them the incorrect principle of relying upon others' help, instead of depending upon their own exertions. . . . Our idea of charity, therefore, is to relieve present wants and then to put the poor in a way to help themselves, so that in turn they may help others. The funds are committed for distribution to wise men, generally to bishops of the Church, whose duty it is to look after the poor.

We submit the equitable Fast Day plan of the Lord to the churches of the world as a wise and sympathetic way of providing for the poor. I say equitable, because it gives an opportunity for the contribution of much or little, according to the position and standing of those who contribute; and besides, it helps both the giver and the receiver. If the churches would adopt the universal monthly Fast Day, as observed by the Latter-day Saints, and devote the means saved during the day to the alleviation, blessing and benefit of the poor, and with a view to helping them to help themselves, there would soon be no poor in the land.

It would be a simple matter for people to comply with this requirement—to abstain from food and drink one day each month, and to dedicate what would be consumed during that day to the poor, and as much more as they pleased. The Lord has instituted this law. It is simple and perfect, based on reason and intelligence, and would not only prove a solution to the question of providing for the poor, but it would result in good to those who observe the law. It would call attention to the sin of overeating, place the body in subjection to the spirit, and so promote communion with the Holy Ghost, and insure a spiritual strength and power which the people of the nation so greatly need.

As fasting should always be accompanied by prayer, this law would bring the people nearer to God, and divert their minds once a month at least from the mad rush of worldly affairs, and cause them to be brought into immediate contact with practical, pure and undefiled religion—to visit the fatherless and the widow, and keep themselves unspotted from the sins of the world. For religion is not in believing the commandments only, but it is in doing them. I would to God that men would

not only believe Jesus Christ and His teachings, but would broaden their belief to the extent of doing the things that are taught by Him, and doing them in spirit.

I think this is excellent counsel. I think it is good sound sense, good doctrine.

During the past several months we have heard a great deal about depression in this land, in fact all over the world.

#### MULTITUDE OF POOR THE WORLD OVER

Daily in our city—and this is a condition to be found in all the cities of our country—it is impossible to walk down the principal street without being approached by some one who is in need of help; men asking for money, or food, or a place to sleep. They come in great numbers to our homes. We all have faced this. Many of these are in want. There are, no doubt, among them some who are taking advantage of the situation, who are not in need.

Now, I maintain, as President Smith here states, that if the people of this nation who have the means, would abstain from eating for two whole meals, or from evening to the evening of the next day, and give that which they would have consumed, or its equivalent, for the support of the poor, we would have no poor among us. There would be no need for men to walk the streets or even be unemployed, for employment would be found for them because of the greater love in the hearts of the people for their fellow men. However, the funds thus received would take care of all the poor in the land. Hundreds of millions of dollars would be collected in this way, and by that means distress could be alleviated without Congress spending months discussing how to further tax the people.

Of course there is even a better plan than this, but the people are not prepared for it. I have referred to the law of consecration; but this cannot come in the day of wickedness. If we could get rid of our selfishness, of the spirit of greed, the desire in the hearts of most men to accumulate at the expense of their fellows; if men of wealth and power would cease to grind the faces of the poor, to oppress the widow and the fatherless and the hireling in his wages, then a new era would dawn. We would have no distress, and instead of wickedness and the dominion of crime, we would have peace, and love would be in the hearts of all the people. But selfishness is in the hearts of the people and the result is wickedness, and wickedness brings about inequality among the people. However, notwithstanding the selfishness and love of wealth, if those who are with means would give the substance of two meals for the blessing of the poor, there would be no poor among us.

*(Continued on page 10)*

THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 1933

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EDITORIAL

CHRISTMAS GREETING FROM THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

TO MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS IN ALL THE WORLD:

Dear Brethren and Sisters:

At this season of the year it is customary for people everywhere to send to their friends and relatives greetings which carry with them their sincere love and appreciation. Knowing that the *Improvement Era* goes to Saints and Elders in every land and clime, we, your brethren, take opportunity through its pages to convey to you a message of good cheer.

In many ways the year has been a hard one for our people, but in others it has brought blessings in rich abundance to our doors. While financial troubles have upset the even course of events not only in America but in other countries as well, they have mellowed the hearts of men and women until perhaps on this Christmas the true spirit of Christianity will shine with an added lustre. Heart may speak to heart, soul to soul, this season, in a manner more pleasing to the Master than for many years.

We wish to assure our people that if they will draw near unto the Lord, He will draw near to them. No earnest, righteous prayer has ever gone unheard or unanswered. No matter in what land we may dwell the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ makes us brothers and sisters, interested in each other, eager to understand and know each other.

The New Year holds out new promises of hope. Men and women everywhere should determine in their hearts that they will be worthy of the Lord's choicest blessings. If they will prepare themselves for the companionship of His Holy Spirit, they will find a new joy which passeth the understanding of man.

May the Lord be with you all, our brothers and sisters, wherever you may dwell. May His peace be in your hearts; may His Spirit inspire you to new achievements in brotherly and neighbourly service. This is the prayer of your brethren in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

HEBER J. GRANT

ANTHONY W. IVINS

The First Presidency of the Church.



## A MESSAGE FROM EUROPE

THE members of the Church who live or serve in Europe stand soberly before the coming annual celebration of the earthly advent of the Saviour of men.

Confusion is engulfing these lands. The captains struggle in dark fogs and without adequate charts. They are helpless. Multitudes are in distress. Things are not as the Lord intended.

Upon my desk lies a letter, written by a sister, a humble member of the Church, who toils daily, at the starvation wage of this land, for bread for herself and others. She points unwittingly to the way out of the world's dilemma.

"Enclosed you will find a £1 note (\$4.89). Would you please put it to any fund there happens to be for help to provide for missionaries while in the field.

"It is not very much, I know, but it may do one atom of good. I hope it will.

"I have saved it by 3d. (6 cents) a week until it reached its present sum.

"Trusting all is well with you and Sister Widtsoe.

"Sincerely yours."

Eighty weeks of laying by 3d. weekly, out of her pitifully small income! Eighty weeks of self-denials, of forgetting herself in a great cause, of sacrifice! Eighty weeks of an increasing fire of love for the Gospel, humanity, and all that the plan of salvation stands for! Is this dear sister happy? Why ask? In the midst of earth's control, though in poverty and insignificance, she is on the road to joy. A sure paymaster is our Lord.

Strange as it may seem, but so it is, that the prime ministers of the nations might sit at the feet of this humble sister, and learn from her how to solve the problems of the day. She has touched the eternal law of devotion and sacrifice, and tapped the everlasting source of peace and prosperity. Devotion, sacrifice, love of man and God, are the ascending steps to earthly and heavenly joy.

Lift your eyes to the Man upon the cross! He gave of Himself, from the beginning, for us, His brethren and sisters, and His love became eternally enduring. His love for us made it possible for Him to walk earth's troubled years to Golgotha. His death gave us life. So must everyone give of himself, else be denied the rich fruits of love. Sacrifice! Sacrifice for a righteous cause is the word of divine power.

There is no other way. Let it be written upon the walls of the earth's great council chambers.

There are many members of the Church in Europe who have learned and who practise the lesson of sacrifice. That is why the little branches here, far removed from the center of the Church, enjoy spiritual feasts. The European saints, one with the Church, learning the same Gospel and engaging in the same activities,

send hearty, grateful and loving greetings to their brethren and sisters in the stakes and missions of Zion throughout the world.—  
JOHN A. WIDTSOE, *Improvement Era*, December, 1932.

## SPIRITUAL STRENGTH THROUGH FASTING

*(Concluded from page 7)*

Some months ago, Senator Smoot, on the floor of the United States Senate, presented this plan which is part of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and which is practised among the Latter-day Saints, and advocated that it be adopted in the nation. He told those wise men that if they would fast one day each month, all the people doing likewise, funds could be raised to care for the poor and the distressed. Under such conditions Congress would not be called upon in a futile effort to meet the conditions which we find to-day. Such doctrine astonished his fellow senators. It astonished the nation. They never heard of such a thing. Some of them, no doubt, could see the virtue of it.

I maintain that if Congress had thoughtfully listened and put into effect such a plan, it would have done more to end the suffering than all that they have done. The suggestion of Senator Reed Smoot was, in my opinion, the most statesmanlike expression heard in the halls of Congress in scores of years. What a blessing it would be if such a plan could be adopted.

They are struggling back there in Washington, trying to raise means to meet the present condition by taxation. They need not do a thing like that. Just let the people once be converted to the need of fasting, as the Lord has revealed that law, and all would be well; means would be raised in a simple but effective way.

I want to comment briefly upon another thing. The very first sentence of the first quotation I gave reads as follows: "Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things." Let me couple with that this saying by President Joseph F. Smith: "I would to God that men would not only believe in Jesus Christ and His teachings, but would broaden their belief to the extent of doing the things that are taught by Him, and doing them in spirit."

We are living in an ungodly world; in an ungodly nation. Men are getting farther and farther away from the truth—the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel. We are paying less attention daily to the commandments of the Lord. Right here in our lovely city, I saw in the paper this morning, it is contemplated that at certain hours of this day—the Sabbath day—there is to be a great demonstration with airplanes over our city. Go out to our public parks which are set apart in Salt Lake City as play grounds, and which, it seems, cannot be dedicated, except it be on the Sabbath day by great demonstrations of sports, and you will find great crowds playing baseball or watching the same.

Go this afternoon to the Lake—I am merely saying what you would see if you did, not asking you to go—and you will find crowds engaged in fun. The same is to be found if you go to the moving picture houses and other places of amusement. These places are crowded, and many who are there are members of the Church. Is the Lord pleased with this? This same condition prevails in most of the nation. At the great Olympic games in Los Angeles, where all the nations assembled as our guests, what do we discover? Nothing will do but the starting of the contest on the day the Lord has said we should spend our time in worship. Nor is the violation of the Sabbath day the only commandment given us which the people are treating with contempt. Can we say that this is a Christian nation? Is not the world getting ripe in iniquity?

Is there any wonder that people are crying for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment? Why, they do not observe any of the laws of God, with honorable exceptions. It is time to cry repentance; to call the people to turn from these evil things. To disregard the Sabbath day is a sin in the sight of God. If we go to the resorts, to pleasure places, we lend our aid to evil and we stand condemned before the judgment seat of God. As sure as we live, the Lord will not endure it forever. We shall receive our reward in punishment.

I cry to the Latter-day Saints: Repent, turn to the Lord. Keep His commandments. Observe the Fast Day, the Sabbath, as the Lord has required it. Go before the Lord in humility and prayer with your stomachs empty and your hearts full, and with your minds determined to serve Him in all things. Then you will get the spirit of this work.

You will know the truth, and you will not have any desire to walk in ways of unrighteousness. The Lord is displeased with the people, and I wish with all my heart there were more to cry repentance, with the courage to tell the people what they need, for they need repentance. Unless there comes a change the anger of the Lord which is kindled shall be felt among the people. I therefore pray for repentance in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.—(Address delivered in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Utah, August 7th, 1932.)

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“MORMONISM” awakens in the hearts of those who can comprehend its splendid credentials that soul-stirring faith in Jesus Christ and in His perfect way of life that impels them to obey Him, and work for Him with that self-sacrificing life that purifies the heart, refines the spirit, ennobles the mind, glorifies the character, and gives that complete victory over foes of the soul which is the highest achievement and perfect salvation.—NEPHI JENSEN.

## A VISITOR'S IMPRESSIONS

MARIAN ROYER

AN interesting and inspiring lecture, telling of her visit to Utah and her regard for the "Mormons," has been received from Marian Royer of San Francisco, by Elder J. W. Banbrough, Salt Lake City, Superintendent of the Sugar House post office.

Elder Banbrough and his wife met Mrs. Royer a few months ago, while attending a postmasters' convention in San Francisco. She learned they were Latter-day Saints, and having read some missionary pamphlets that had come into her possession in a round about way, she made many inquiries of them. They became good friends and during the recent summer months, Mrs. Royer visited Salt Lake for six days as their guest.

At the request of her hosts, that she write them her impressions of Salt Lake, Mrs. Royer recently forwarded them a letter she had written to her sister.

The letter is as follows :

A friend sent me a book recently, entitled, *Why I Became a Mormon*. I recall that he used a great many pages to tell why. I think I have him beat "a Salt Lake City block," because I can tell it in one sentence, viz., "I spent a week in Salt Lake City."

A week's stay over in the capital of Utah gave me thrill after thrill. Notwithstanding St. Paul's admonition of "honour to whom honour is due," scant attention has been paid to it by many people. We hear the most puerile, childish criticism of this great people, by thousands of other Christian groups. Why? Who can explain this strange phenomena?

The power of an ideal to bind men together, not in a static condition, but in a process of orderly growth, marks the "Mormons."

Prophet, priest, king and commoner—the component parts of all civilizations of past ages—were brought together in this group.

Perhaps unaware of the significance thereof, the Latter-day Saints have completed the royal march of the ages: like the worthies of old they left their homes, not knowing whither they went; they passed through the Patriarchal Age, through the Judges, on through the Law and the Prophets, down to a glorious fulfillment in Jesus Christ. They have compressed centuries of progress into one century, and are now proving the value of theocratic democracy.

The beginnings of this people mark one of the romances of the ages. Not willingly did they leave well-ordered homes, loved ones, tender ties, fond associations. They fled before persecution more bitter than that visited upon the Pilgrim forefathers; they were reviled, mocked, had bitter trials, but ever held firm to their faith. And upon what was that faith builded? Upon the fact that a beautiful youth, praying in the seclusion of a stately grove,



had seen an angel. This angel, this vision marked a new order in human affairs. Did the public accept such a view of the matter? Study the history of "Mormonism" and see what they thought.

Joseph Smith was a great prophet; prophets ever have been high powered lights burning in the darkness. And the darkness, like a prowling, vengeful, wild beast, comes alive, snarling, clawing, beating and killing. Of course Joseph Smith must die. Only thus could he set the seal of Truth upon his message. Only thus could he prove that he is high enough to hear the glorious golden trumpet tones of the flying angel. And mortal man catches no such vision as that of the Angel Moroni. Have you ever stood in the Temple Block and looked upward at that figure atop the "Mormon" Temple? It is more of heaven than of earth—more like the gods than it is like unto men.

The light that comes to civilization is always Divine Light; study the history of the past century and note what light has been shed upon Science, Art, Religion, Industry—upon every phase of human activity. (I am writing this quite sketchily, I assure you.)

I am inclined to the belief that America owes much of her progress to the light which has shined upon her through the vision of that holy man, Joseph Smith. What did not the vision of Isaiah do for Israel? And that of Jeremiah, and Hosea and all the other prophets, greater and lesser? Without the prophet where the teacher?

The present letter is to say that an angel flew through the midst of earth in the early eighteen hundreds and called for "A New Order" in America. Who responded? Leaders? Yes. "But," averred the angel, "you will pay for your places of leadership with blood and tears, with false accusations, with trips through the judgment hall, and perchance on up to Calvary. Are you able to drink the cup?" And a strong, sturdy group of volunteers responded. They paid the price immortals ever have paid, but in so doing they gained the hills of Zion, and there we find them to-day, by the grace of God.

The "Mormons" are a gracious people. I was a guest in a home where the finer things of life were constantly at the fore, where love and kindness were the ruling principles of the household. From whence did those guiding qualities emanate? From their religion.

I discussed them with their non-"Mormon" neighbours who constantly asserted that they were "the best people imaginable." I stood in the Temple block and saw the travellers from many lands; heard the guides explaining the beliefs of the "Mormons;" heard the concert as the pipe organ pealed forth melodious music; heard the choir chant some of their incomparable hymns, as well as the choicest of the classics; heard and saw, and felt—it was all RIGHT. And, as I stood and gazed upon the golden glory of the

figure of Moroni, from the topmost tower of the tall and stately Temple, my heart told me that here was no deception or error, but the tangible assurance that a great and mighty truth had been put into operation.

I see that I spoke without knowledge when I said that I could explain my belief in one sentence, and did not need to write a brochure. I think that is just what I would have to do, to tell only a small part of what "Mormonism" meant to me in one brief visit. I saw a church in the action, where each was drilled like a well-trained soldier in the army, but where the love of God filled the heart; I saw the city from the heights of the Capitol grounds, saw their splendid University, their fine, up-to-date school buildings, their beautiful women, their handsome, well-groomed men, their respectful children, their regard for their elders, their buildings with marvellous notes of beauty, their museum, their great organ, their notable choir, their guides, their charming homes, their chapels, and last but not most amazing of all that Temple of God, with the tall, shining, golden glory of an angel atop of it—all because a young prophet prayed and caught a vision. What is God going to do with the men who scoff and who will never see a vision. That is the query which worries me.

I shall close this letter with a quotation from their Articles of Faith: "We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; . . . If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things."

I am not an authority on "Mormonism," but if you are interested in knowing more about them I shall see to it that you have some literature sent to you that is authentic.—(Published in *The Deseret News*, December 10th, 1932.)

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### BRISTOL DISTRICT CONFERENCE

By applying the words of the Saviour, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," to modern conditions, much interest was created at the semi-annual district conference held at Bristol, December 4th. All three meetings were permeated by the spirit of conference, and it was indeed a time of rejoicing for the many members who had gathered to hear the word of God.

After the opening exercises in the morning session, the assembly separated into two groups. While President Douglas and Patriarch Wallis were listening to the reports and making suggestions to the Priesthood group, the sisters were receiving encouragement and instructions pertaining to their duties from Sisters Wallis and Douglas. At the dissolution of these group meetings, the saints were filled with a determination to do their part, by

carrying out the admonitions received from God's chosen leaders.

The meetings of the day were all presided over by District President Herman L. Anderson, who gave a report of district activities for the past six months. He stated among other things that the travelling Elders had spent 1,383 hours distributing 57,665 tracts, as well as placing in the homes of those interested 1,369 pamphlets and 35 copies of the Book of Mormon. The report also showed that in order to do 10,963 hours of active missionary work, it was necessary for these young men to spend approximately £400. At the conclusion of the report, President Anderson introduced the theme to be developed in the afternoon session. "A religion," he said, "that rejects truth because it will not corroborate its dogmas is an abomination in the sight of God." He then went on and explained why mankind is unable to find joy and happiness till they have been ushered into the presence of truth. The missionaries were then called upon, and one by one they explained the "Mormon" philosophy of life, converging on the central thought that an understanding of the truth will bring to mankind health, happiness and eternal life.

In the evening the time was turned over to the visiting authorities. Sisters Wallis and Sister Douglas both gave very interesting reminiscent talks. President Douglas spoke impressively on some of the incidents associated with early Church history, and related his visits to places of early Church history. Patriarch Wallis discoursed on the moral standards of the Church, explaining the doctrines of the Church. He concluded his remarks by expressing the joy he had received through his testimony of the Gospel. Beautiful musical numbers were rendered throughout the services. The many members and friends in attendance were deeply touched by the friendliness and reassurance brought them by the authorities, and returned to their homes with stronger testimonies and greater love for the Gospel.

Missionaries and authorities in attendance were: Patriarch and Sister James H. Wallis of the European Mission; President and Sister James H. Douglas and Elder Percy L. Matthews of the British Mission; President Herman L. Anderson, Elders Dallas A. Berrett, Warren M. Tingey, Kenneth M. Wheelwright, Joseph H. Chapman and Harold Sycamore of the Bristol District.

DALLAS A. BERRETT, Clerk of Conference.

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THE Ten Commandments were not done away with when the carnal law came to an end, for they constitute governing laws given to man in the beginning. Adam, and his children after him where-in they were willing to obey the Gospel, living in accordance with them. They were old when Moses, the great law-giver of Israel, came on the scene.—JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH.

## NOBILITY.

TRUE worth is in being, not seeming ;  
 In doing each day that goes by  
 Some little good—not in dreaming  
 Of great things to do by and by.  
 For whatever men say in their blindness,  
 And spite of the fancies of youth,  
 There's nothing so kingly as kindness,  
 And nothing so royal as truth.

We get back our mete as we measure :  
 We cannot do wrong and feel right ;  
 Nor can we give pain and gain pleasure,  
 For justice avenges each slight.  
 The air for the wing of the sparrow,  
 The bush for the robin and wren,  
 But always the path that is narrow  
 And straight for the children of men.

We cannot make bargains for blisses,  
 Nor catch them like fishes in nets,  
 And sometimes the thing our life misses  
 Helps more than the thing which it gets.  
 For good lieth not in pursuing,  
 Nor gaining of great nor of small ;  
 But just in the doing—and doing  
 As we would be done by, is all.

Through envy, through malice, through hating,  
 Against the world early and late,  
 No jot of our courage abating,  
 Our part is to work and to wait.  
 And slight is the sting of his trouble  
 Whose winnings are less than his worth ;  
 For he who is honest is noble,  
 Whatever his fortunes or birth.

ALICE CARY.

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